CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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LETTER DATED 3 APRIL 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF SOUTH AFRICA ADDRESSED TO THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING A MEDIA STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA ON 31 MARCH 1998 CONCERNING SOUTH AFRICA'S RATIFICATION OF THE AFRICAN NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE TREATY (TREATY OF PELINDABA)

I have the honour to transmit to you a media statement issued by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa on 31 March 1998 concerning South Africa's ratification of the African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba).

I would be grateful if the necessary arrangements could be made for its distribution to all member and participating non-member state delegations, under cover of a CD number.

(Signed) J.S. Selebi
Ambassador

* Reissued for technical reasons

MEDIA STATEMENT ON SOUTH AFRICA'S RATIFICATION OF THE AFRICAN NUCLEAR WEAPON-FREE ZONE TREATY (TREATY OF PELINDABA)

South Africa deposited its Instrument of Ratification of the African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, commonly known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, with the Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) on 27 March 1998. The OAU will inform all signatories of the Treaty of Pelindaba formally in due course.

In terms of the Treaty, the Parties undertake not to acquire and possess nuclear explosive devices and to prevent the stationing of such devices on their territories. The Treaty also prohibits nuclear testing, the dumping of radioactive waste and contains provisions on the safety of nuclear installations. It aims at strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, promoting cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, promoting general and complete disarmament and enhancing regional and international peace and security.

Ambassador Welile Nhlapo, South Africa's Permanent Representative to the OAU, deposited the Instrument of Ratification with the OAU Secretary-General,Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim at the OAU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim congratulated the South African Government on the decision to ratify the Treaty and expressed his gratitude for the contribution made by South Africa in the preparation for the Pelindaba Treaty and for playing a leading role in the realisation on the Treaty.

The African Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty requires 28 ratifications to enter into force. To date it has been ratified by Mauritius, Gambia, Mauritania, Algeria and South Africa.

The Headquarters of the Secretariat of the Treaty, The African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONE), as envisaged by the Treaty, is to be situated in South Africa.

The deposit of the Instrument of Ratification follows the earlier ratification of the Treaty by the South African Parliament in November 1997.

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PRETORIA
31 MARCH 1998